



NOAA
FISHERIES

Final Rule Designating North Atlantic Right Whale Critical Habitat

South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council
Protected Resources Committee Meeting

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Preface

Presentation excludes:

- Background and Proposed Rule (See NARW Critical Habitat Presentation from March 2015 SAFMC Meeting)

Presentation focuses on:

- Critical habitat in SER (Unit 2) –particularly changes from Proposed Rule

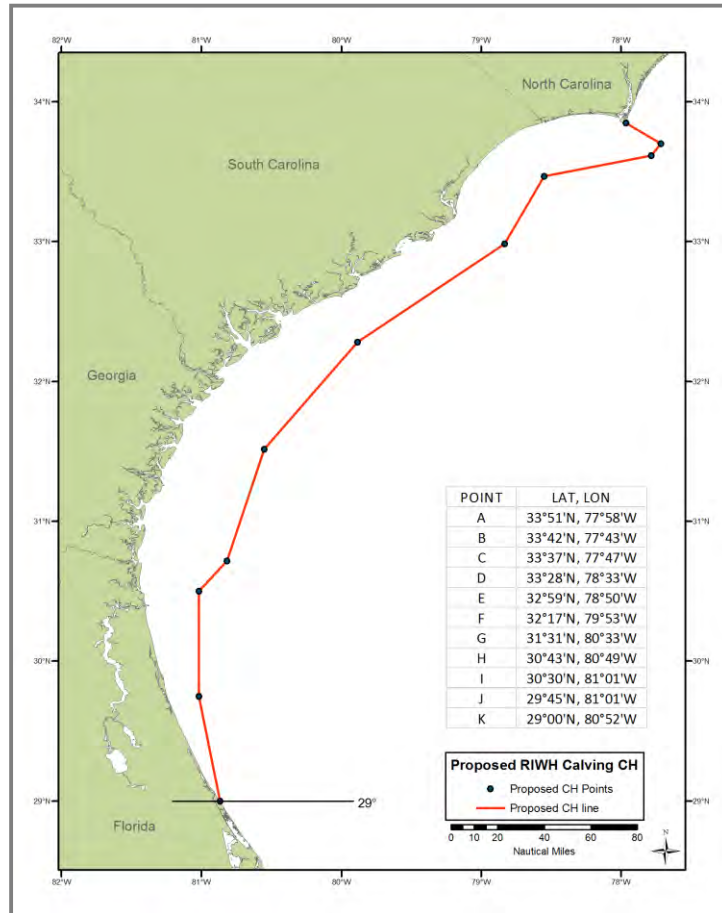
NARW Calving Habitat Essential Features

1. Calm seas surface conditions of Force 4 or less on the Beaufort Wind Scale;
2. Sea surface temperatures from a minimum of 7°C and never more than 17°C; and
3. Water depths of 6 to 28 meters, where...

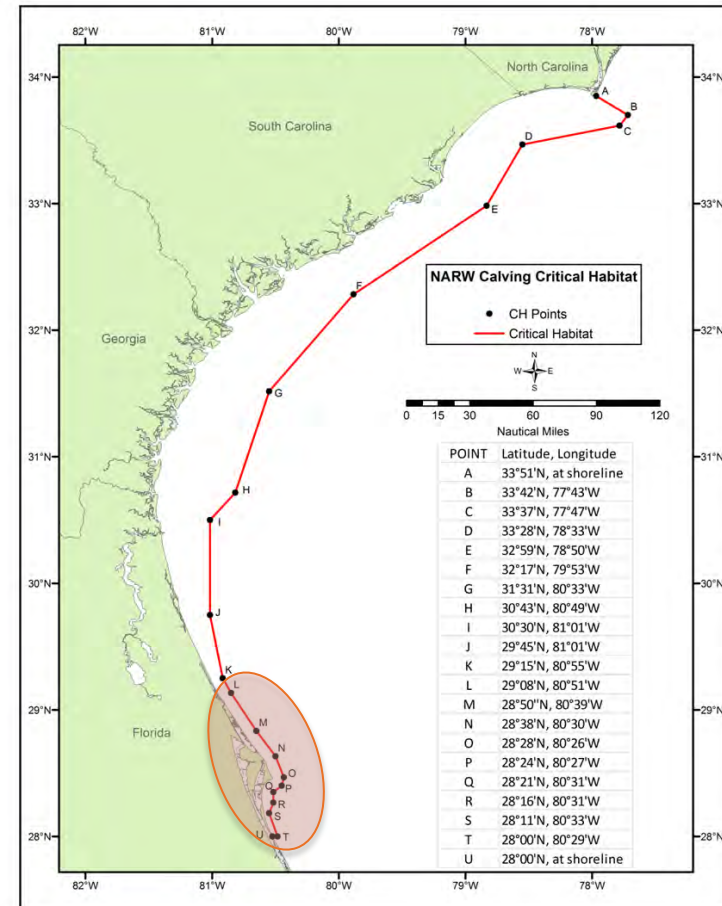
these features simultaneously co-occur over contiguous areas of at least 231 km² of ocean waters during the months of November through April.

Photo by Florida FWC, taken under NOAA permit #15488

Proposed vs. Final Critical Habitat (Unit 2)



8,088 nm²
Proposed

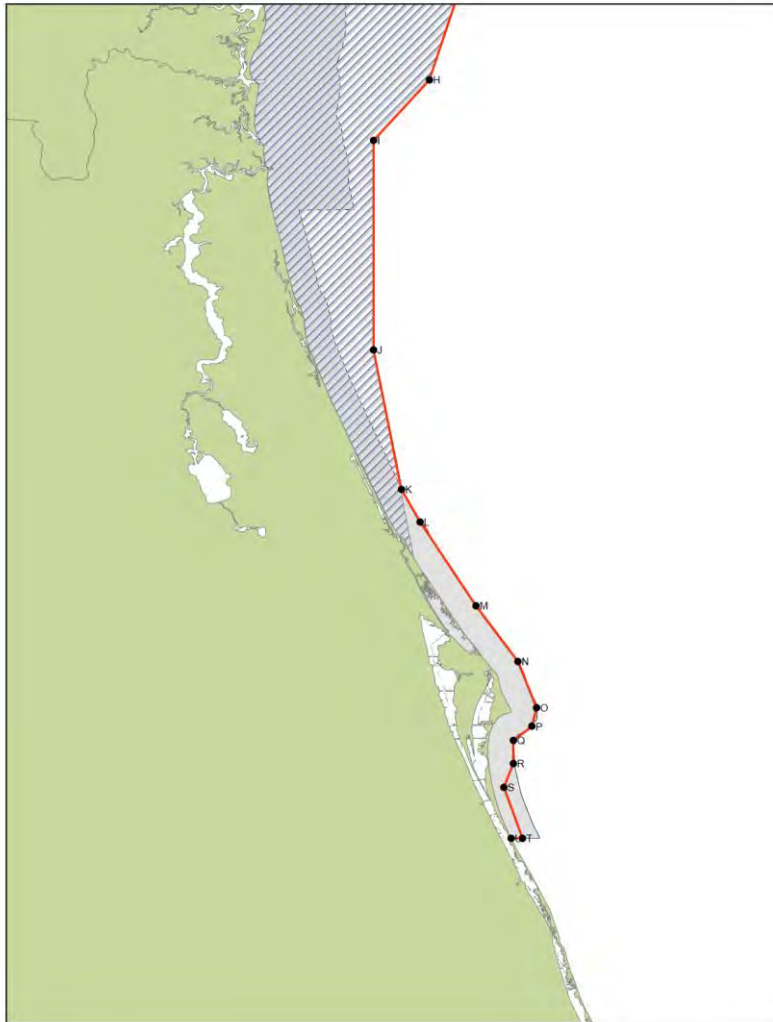


8,429 nm²
Final

Reason for Adding “Southern Tail”

- A number of comments received about including the southern portion in critical habitat
- NMFS considered and agreed because:
 - m/c pairs within the area are predictable and consistent,
 - Presence of all essential features are predicted to occur at least part of the calving season when m/c pairs are present in the area, and
 - Features in the area may require special management similar to elsewhere in calving area critical habitat

Old, Proposed, and Final Critical Habitat



Old



Proposed



Final

What “May Effect” Critical Habitat?

Based on Past Consultations

- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting
- Oil spill response
- Dredging and spoil disposal
- Marine Construction Permitting
- Construction and operation of energy facilities

What “May Effect” Critical Habitat?

New Categories Anticipated:

- Oil and gas exploration and development
- Offshore alternative energy development
- Directed copepod fisheries
- Marine aquaculture



New England Aquarium



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